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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/549,979	02/06/2006	Bruce A. Dale	2003UR013	3442
34477	7590	01/28/2008		
Exxon Mobil Upstream Research Company P.O. Box 2189 (CORP-URC-SW 359) Houston, TX 77252-2189			EXAMINER THOMPSON, KENNETH L	
			ART UNIT 3672	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 01/28/2008	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/549,979

Applicant(s)

DALE ET AL.

Examiner

KENNETH THOMPSON

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Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-81 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10, 13-21, 23-27, 29, 31, 32, 34-41, 43-81 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 12, 22, 28, 30, 33 and 42 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB08)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13-19, 36-41, 43, 44, 46, 68, 69, 71, 72 and 76-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sparlin et al., U.S. 5,476,143.

Sparlin et al. discloses in figures 1 and 2 first and second eccentric, elongated, annular flow joints between wall portions (6c) of the shunt tubes (6) having a perforation (2a) therebetween; wherein the inner diameter of joints of pipe (2) provide communication between the permeable sections (at 2a and 5) of the joints; including a plurality of walls (3) in the flow joints to form a plurality of third flow pathways (col. 7, lines 35-41) having a permeable section (at 5), and a central opening (7) in the shunt tube section. Sparlin et al. discloses gravel packing an oil well (col. 8, lines 4-30).

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24-27, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 44, 45, 48, 49, 52-63, 66, 67, 70, 73-75, 80 and 81 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Echols et al., U.S. 5,803,179.

Echols et al. discloses a plurality of first cylindrical flow joints (40) having a screen (34), perforations (92), fluid paths (32), labyrinth/baffle (36) or series of

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compartments forming third fluid paths on opposite axial ends of each screen. Echols et al. discloses a second inner concentric cylindrical flow joint (26) having perforations (28), a flow path extending to the surface; wherein the third flow path is positioned radially between the first and second joints. Echols et al. discloses suitable couplings (20) for placement in the horizontal section of the well for formation fluid flow through the screen (34), wherein flow is divided to a third flow path. The pipe sections (18) and piping string (16) of the first and second flow joints appear to be at least 15 centimeters long.

Claim 47 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nagaoka, U.S. 4,818,403.

Nagaoka discloses a screen having impermeable sections (8, 7) and wire wrapping (6,4) with varying pitches

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11, 12, 22, 28, 30, 33 and 42 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **KENNETH THOMPSON** whose telephone number is (571)272-7037. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00-3:00 Monday - Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J. Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

24 January 2008

/KENNETH THOMPSON/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3672